It is near my dinner hour, and I think, from the Golden Gallery, I can almost distinguish the special savoury puff of smoke from my own chimney, that signals me home. It is as the cock-crow to the talkative ghost in *Hamlet;* "I must begone;" and must conclude by saying, that except Columbus a better great man than Wren never lived. He had a calmness of temper no vexation or injury could disturb, he was a humble modest soul, and, as his son tells us, he "had such wonderful sweetness of temper, such a steady tranquillity of mind, and such pious fortitude, that no injurious incidents or inquietudes of human life, could ever ruffle or discompose him."

"But hark! methinks I hear a voice:" it is the beadle, telling me that "All gents must leave the Golden Gallery, as service is over." I don't see the logic of the beadle's warning, but I humour him, and, descending, become for a time invisible to the *Eclectic* readers.

VII.

SUN PICTURES.

BY MARY HOWITT.

SUN-PICTURES, as secured by the photographic art, are amongst the most beautiful and interesting discoveries of the present day. We saw a great number—unproduced, however, on paper—during a late three days' excursion in the country. Perhaps we may be able to secure a few of them through the faithful photography of memory. Let us try.

We—that is, two ladies, one middle-aged and the other quite young, mother and daughter—are on the platform of a railway station; a very pretty station, as they build them now-a-days in the country, with a pleasant flower garden on the steep railway banks, coming down to the very edge of the platform. Roses, in full bloom; masses of white pinks, deep blue campanulas, amidst which shine out yellow poppies, yellow crown imperials and day lilies, like sunshine amid the other flowers, making the little garden a gorgeous array of natural beauty. A clerical group, with their white cravats and almost priestly attire, are on the platform, bound for some church consecration; and with them the bright looking ladies, fresh and pure as the gardens of the country parsonages, from which they have been brought hither in those pretty Craydon and other carriages which are now driving away from the station. It seems a happy meeting to everybody, to us also, for we have friends amongst them. And now, in the hurried three minutes before the arrival of the train which will convey away the clerical group, a hundred things have to be said, in the categorical form of question and answer: "Where are we bound?" "What are we going to see?" and we in return ask equally rapidly, "Which is our best route?" "What is most worth seeing?" and "What is the best sleep-

ing-place at the remote village of Waystones, where we propose spending the night?" A whole guide-book is compressed into two minutes; and finally, the tallest of the clerical gentlemen, our acquaintance, rushing to the shortest, who is not our acquaintance, for information; and as the train smoothly glides up, and the porter says, "Now, gentlemen!" we are informed that "The Black Bull," is our inn at Waystones, kept by one Malkin, or Mawkin. "Remember, Mawkin or Malkin!" shouts our tall friend, disappearing into his first-class carriage, at the train begins to move. We promise implicit obedience, and as the train vanishes in the distance, we sit down to examine ourselves in our hastily conned lesson, and notice another group waiting, like ourselves, for the ten minutes later train.

This group is a dapper little man and woman, parents of a dapper little child,—aged twenty months, as we are informed—which, in a white beaver hat and blue feather, and little green pelise, trots about, the veriest minikin that ever eyes beheld. Whether it be the fairy queen herself, or a little hobgoblin dressed up for the occasion, or a marionette "pride of the village," it was impossible to say; for anything quainter, older, odder or tinier in human form, never was beheld. We looked at the parents, so well-contented with themselves and each other, and so proud of the minikin; and then at the minikin itself, with its tiny buttoned-up boots, its tiny gloved hands, its tiny face looking out from under the brim of the white beaver hat, with such a marvellous expression of wisdom and experience, gathered up somewhere and somehow, as makes us, turning again to the parents, remark very naturally, "Only twenty months old, you say?" It could not have been older, and, judging from its size, not even half twenty. The father and mother both reply in a breath, "No, only twenty months;" both adding, "but it got its teeth so hard!" And then the father subsiding, the mother explained, "that it had been at death's door many a time, and they never thought to have reared it." And as she speaks, the minikin, standing by her knee, looks up and smiles such a ghastly little smile, as if it knew all about it, and a great deal more too.

Poor little mysterious human soul, what strange knowledges were lodged within it! It had garnered up into the treasury of its being far more wisdom than was contained in all those clerical intellects now steaming away, though they might be the pride of both Oxford and Cambridge. "Many a time it had been at death's door." To be sure it had, and had looked fairly into that other world beyond; and it was the weary turning back again into this life, the dullness of its shadows, the painfulness even of its pleasures, which had withered up into such a wierd and quaint little atomy, a baby of twenty months old!

But the train is coming up. "Now, ladies!" says the porter; and we enter our carriage, and the dapper little couple and the tiny minikin disappear likewise into theirs.

We are now in the gardens of a palace, and everywhere rhododen-

drons are in bloom. Sixty acres of garden of unimaginable beauty, and the whole surrounded with a turfed drive, like a belt of green velvet, now leading under overarching trees, as if in fairy land; now opening into vistas, or presenting views of singular loveliness; and here the ladies used to drive in their beautiful carriages! Now we are in a quaint Dutch garden, very trim and very formal, with its orangeries, and fountains, and quaintly patterned borders, in the midst of fine gravel; and here, as everywhere, is that wonderful gush of rhododendrons. Now a French garden, in the style of Louis Quatorze, and again fountains and temples, and gorgeous conservatories, and statues of nymphs and satyrs, and long alleys bordered with flowers. Now a Swiss wilderness, where, in the old times, we are informed, women worked in Swiss costume, two suits of which "my lady" had every year from Switzerland for each woman; not, however, to be worn out of the garden, because the village boys hooted them, as once happened to an adventurous gardeneress, after which the costume belonged only to the wilderness. And here again, though the women in Swiss attire were absent, glowed those wondrous rhododendrons, in close communion with masses of golden gorse and broom. And now we are in a Chinese garden, with its artificial waters, its bell-hung and many-coloured fountain pagoda, and its carved bridges; its grassy terraces, and flights of stone steps, and quaint groups of tall cypresses, cut in strange bell-shaped forms, all exactly alike, crowning the terraces in circular sweeps, each sweep different, but with its fellow; and all giving a view of the artificial water below, the ornamental bridges, and the tall fountain pagoda. Here only are no rhododendrons. Nothing but green is here; two shades of green,—the bright tint of the velvet terraces, and the dark tint of the tall, bell-shaped cypresses; nothing but these two greens and the soft grey of the stone steps, forming a pleasing contrast, no doubt, according to the code of taste in the Celestial Empire, to the many-coloured fountain pagoda below, with its scarlet, white, and green bridges.

All grand palaces and ancestral halls have an old time belonging to their history; and this place, like them, can refer to endless memories, each a commentary on the vanity of human wishes; and though not dating back above fifty years, it has had its succession of earls, generation after generation; more vicissitudes of life and death, of building up and pulling down, than many another house that boasts of its ten centuries. Wealth to a fabulous amount has been lavished upon it; nothing was too costly for it. Silver and gold, and precious stones, and the most elaborately perfected works of man embellished it; silken hangings were too poor for its walls. It was a miracle of art and beauty, which seemed as if framed to last for ever. It had its fêtes, like the fêtes of princes; its illuminated gardens; its pride of the eye, and its pleasure of the heart; it had its young men and maidens, who were as kings' sons and daughters. But the *mêné mêné* of a mysterious fiat was upon it. The great tree of its prosperity was shaken, as by the fierce winds of autumn, and its honours were stripped

and scattered abroad. Where there is a great spoil, there are the eagles gathered; and the eagles, in the form of lawyers, gathered around and above this costly spoil, and the contest of possession between the rival lines, was fought out year after year. The rhododendrons grew taller and thicker, and bloomed ever more abundantly; the Swiss wilderness became tenfold a wilderness, whence, though the Swiss maidens disappeared, rabbits burrowed by thousands, and jays built and basked in their azure beauty, whilst the contest went on. But now, even now, it was decided. On the very eve of that morning, the great question was settled, which of two noble, but much differing lines, was to be lord of this modern, many-mirrored palace. As yet, however, the important edict has not reached the place which it so much concerned. Everybody is in doubt, everybody in anxiety; everybody on the look-out and the listen, for some say that a telegraphic message will be despatched from London; some that it will not; some, that the long strife cannot possibly be decided, and these are they who fear the decision will be unfavourable to their wishes; others, that a few hours, nay even a few minutes, may convey thither the tidings they hope for, and glory and prosperity again crown the place.

But minutes and hours move on, and there are no tidings. We trace the green velvet-like belt which surrounds this gorgeous pleasaunce, and from rustic observatories, exalted here and there on the heights, overlook the wonderful fairyland, with its rhododendron colouring breaking in amongst the many tinted greens, and shining out in the long gushes of sunlight; but still no telegraphic intelligence has yet arrived to settle here the long-disputed question of possession.

And now, turning into vast courts and under immense walls, like the fortress walls of a city, we see, on a lofty tower which rises above a lordly entrance, the tattered hatchment of the last earl, slowly flapping in the wind, and passing through a wicket in the door of a wide arched entrance, we find ourselves in the gorgeous chapel of the old line. Two faiths as well as two families dispute the possession of this place, and we are led onward by a pale-faced young man, whose heart yearns to the old Romish religion, and who sees in every ornament of this sainted chapel a portion, as it were, of his own soul. He is mean-looking, and has an anxious, depressed countenance. He points out the grand pictures, the jewelled crucifix, the holy emblazonment of the altar, the sacred purport of each splendid window, with a deep sigh. He cannot speak without sighing, for he is very anxious and sorrowful. He evidently has no joyful hope from the long-delayed telegraphic message. And now he turns our eyes from the caryatidal rows of kneeling angels, each reading a book emblazoned with gold and crimson —from saint and symbol, from old family pomp of worship, and the encrusted ornamentation of the chancel, representing one mass of jewels—from all these he turns our eyes, and, with melancholy demeanour, claims our attention for the magnificent organ, which, facing the altar, rises aloft, as it were, amongst the kneeling angels, the mournful majesty of unuttered music. "To think," he says, "that it has been

silent all these years!" "You love music, then?" we say. "Better than anything else in the world," is his short reply. "But mass is performed here still," we observe, "though there is no family." "Only low mass," he says, with that mournful cadence, "and, therefore, no music." "But do not you yourself play on the organ?" we inquire. "Yes," he answers, "when there is any one to blow; there is a man in the village who blows for me sometimes, and a servant in the house, when he has time. It is a splendid organ," says he, proudly, "with three sets of keys!" "Will you not play for us?" we ask. He looks at us with his melancholy eyes, as if measuring our worthiness for so great a privilege, and says, "Yes, I will." We leave the chapel, and ascending two flights of stairs, the first of which lands us on a level with the gilded gallery in which the great family had knelt to worship our Lord and His mother, we stand face to face with the mighty slumbering soul of music which that melancholy young man is about to awake. Of course if he plays we must blow; accordingly, mounting upon a low step, first one and then the other works the heavy iron lever which gives breath to the Leviathan; and the next moment the lofty chapel, from the highest centre of its roof to the lowest level of its floor, seems to throb and heave with the swelling pulsations of the most wonderful melody. It is hard work to blow that great organ, but light indeed for such a repayment; and not more astonishing than the pulsing, surging torrent of harmony which pealed forth into the silence is the total change in that young man's being. No longer dim-eyed, dreamy and melancholy, he sits there an inspired musician, with flushed cheek and upturned eyes, as a brother of St. Cecilia might have appeared. First he gives expression to a low, mournful symphony, as if all the surrounding angels were lamenting the sorrows and humiliations of their church. Anything sadder, grander, or more heart-touching cannot be conceived. It is as if the immense sorrow with which our Lord wept over Jerusalem had here found expression. Then follows another strain. Above the lamenting voices of the angels is heard the triumph of the eternal church, which no time or change can overturn, the jubilant utterance of thousands and tens of thousands whose garments are washed white in the blood of the Lamb, who have come forward from great tribulation and suffering, from contumely and poverty, to be crowned kings rejoicing for ever and ever!

It is a wonderful inspiration. Pearly drops stand on the young man's brow; his eyes are upturned as if he gazes into the celestial life of which he has prophesied, and a smile of indescribable beauty plays round his parted lips. Thanks are poor payment for this surpassing entertainment; but he does not seem to expect them; and hastily wiping the keys and closing the organ front, he walks down stairs before us without a word. The least we can do is to wish, as we do heartily, that whichever branch, Catholic or Protestant, has come into possession, that true worship may be offered to the Divine Saviour and Teacher in that chapel, and that he may be its organist. But the

old melancholy, hopeless, and faded look has again taken possession of his countenance, and without a smile he watches us depart.

Again we are at a railway station. It is a hot summer's afternoon, and every object shines out bright and clear, as if traced and coloured with prismatic hues. Everywhere lie strong lights and deep shadows, and every colour is intensified by sunshine. Again the station-master's garden is full of flowers, and out of the cavities of tree-stumps, placed at regular intervals, flow, as it were, streams of colour; masses of snowy pinks, crimson campions, yellow sedums, and blue nepetu. The station-master's little children bask amongst the flowers, or play with a large white and fawn coloured setter, which quiescently flaps his bushy tail, and lazily snaps at the flies. The calm repose of summer sunshine is over all. The woods on the surrounding hills seem to sleep in the afternoon glow, swallows slowly skim about in pursuit of flies, but every other bird is still; not a song is heard, but only two cuckoos answering each other, like shout and echo. Labourers are leisurely at work, shovelling gravel on the line, and slowly amusing themselves with a poor joke about the sleepers on which the rails rest, and which one of them persists in calling *slumber-planks*. It seems inimitably witty to them, and the quiet laugh of the men, and the changes that are rung on the one idea, represented by *sleeping* and *slumbering* is, at all events, amusing, even to us for the moment.

Presently a gay party comes sweeping down the station steps. Three young ladies, as fresh as May mornings, in their delicate muslin dresses, with smart little jackets, and in coquettish hats and sweeping feathers, accompanied by three young men, their counterparts, in tourist-style of grey suit, in three varieties of shade, wide-awakes, each one more picturesque than the other, and bearded and moustached, each beard or moustache being of a more golden brown or richer black than his fellow. This is a model group, fit either for Brighton or Llandudno, and at once the silence and dreaminess of the scene is at an end. The station-master's children start up to look at them; the quiet jocularity of the *sleeping* and *slumbering* labourers is silenced in the gay silvery voices and laughter of the new group. They have brought animation with them. The railway porter, in his corduroy suit, comes forth from some hiding-place behind the station, and moves a ladder from one part of the platform to another. The station-master advances to his post. A country-woman in black, carrying a bundle, and a young lad in bran-new clothes, which sit awkwardly upon him, now descend the station steps and stand upon the platform, apart from the gay group, who pace hither and thither, and laugh at each other from a distance. But the country-woman and the boy notice nothing, think of nothing but that one great sorrow which is crushing their hearts—the parting just now at hand. Their shoes are dusty; they both look hot and weary; they have walked far, and have had many a painful and loving communion on the way. The woman looks almost stern with her suppressed emotion, the boy astonished and half scared. They have got the ticket, at least she has, and still

holding the bundle, as if she would not part with it till the last moment, she puts the ticket, with her own hand, into his waistcoat pocket, which in proof that he knows what he is about, he immediately takes out again, looks on it at both sides, and then gently returns to his pocket. As yet neither has said a word to the other; the laughter and merriment of the tourist party, as it sweeps hither and thither, matters nothing to them.

But now the porter rings the bell. An intimation has been received in some mysterious way that the train is approaching, and the mother, still holding his bundle, turns to the boy, in the corner of the platform, where they have stood from the first, and throwing her one disengaged arm round his neck, holds him for a long embrace, neither of them speaking. The train is in sight; people withdraw from the edge of the platform, and the mother, now putting the bundle into the boy's hand says, "Dunna forget, my lad; dunna forget! I shanna forget they (thee)!" "No, mother!" he said, shortly, and with his bundle mounted into a third-class carriage saying, from the window, before he seated himself, "I shall write when I'm on boord; yo'll get th' letter in a dee or tu." She nodded, but said nothing; and the train moved off; so did she, going slowly up the station steps, and wiping her eyes with the corner of her shawl.

The train leaves us in a different scene. We are in the midst of valleys which intersect round hills. Branch railways run up many of these valleys, and the tall chimneys of smelting-houses are seen at various distances, whilst behind or above many of the round hills columns of black smoke, rising slowly in the evening sunlight, or the deep shadow, as it may chance to be, tell that there also the same work prevails. It is a small mining region, not considerable enough to gather into its recesses a large town, but the scattered population for many miles along the valleys or on the hill sides, find here their employment, and the groups of men that we now and then see returning home for the night, have the smeared or swarthy look of the miner or worker in the smelting-house.

We are now on our road to Waystones, and leaving the mining station with its branch railways, we are directed by a miller with his fat horse and cart, heavily laden with flour sacks, who is just setting forth from the picturesque mill below, to take the road which he takes, up the steep hill before us, for he too is going to Waystones. We inquire the distance, and after more thought than we might have supposed the question demanded, we were informed "About three miles." Three miles! that is no great distance, we think; but as he seems dubious, "we pin our faith neither on his sleeve," nor yet on his flour bags. It is a very steep, long hill, and as the miller, his fat horse, and his heavy cart, meandering from side to side, make very slow progress, we go briskly a-head, pausing every now and then to rest, and look at the extensive landscape which is opening around us; one sweep of hills behind another, some wooded, others with a stern, bare outline, whilst far to the right, beyond the mining district which

we are leaving, arises stern and grey, a remarkably tall, stone church tower, so like a landmark in character, that it is almost impossible not to believe that the great ocean lies beyond that long barrier of hills.

(*To be continued.*)

VIII.

THE ENDOWED SCHOOLS BILL.

THE measure to the character and prospects of which we propose to call the attention of our readers in this article, is destined, if we are not greatly mistaken, to excite at least as much public interest, and to encounter at least as determined an opposition as the Bill for the Abolition of Church Rates. Like that Bill, it will be met with open hostility, and will have to make its way in spite of the lukewarm support of friends of very questionable sincerity; and, like that Bill, it will serve to bring out sharply the practical difficulties of compromise between those who support and those who assail a principle so important as that involved in the exclusive privileges of the Established Church. A Bill has been brought into Parliament, which seems to those for whose benefit it was destined the plainest and most moderate measure of simple justice, and nothing more. By those with whose exclusive rights—or wrongs, it may be—it would interfere, it is treated as an act of impudent spoliation. Between parties entertaining such conflicting views it is not easy to see how any compromise tolerably satisfactory to either could be effected; and the result of the deliberations of the Select Committee of the House of Commons, charged with the thankless task of attempting it, has been just what might have been anticipated—a wretched milk-and-water affair, totally indefensible upon the principles of one party, and offering to the other a miserable dole of left-handed, eleemosynary *relief* (properly enough so called), which probably no one concerned in the concoction was weak enough to suppose would be accepted. Valuable time has been consumed upon this abortive effort to bring fire and water into peaceful and harmonious contact, but we do not know that it has been altogether lost. Under the most favourable circumstances, it would have been impossible, even supposing the Bill carried through Committee, read a third time, and passed in the Commons, to have made any serious progress with it in the House of Lords, this Session; the discussion would have been hurried, and the subject hustled out of the way, with that quiet indignity which awaits most topics, when the 12th of August is at hand; and the labours of the Select Committee have at least answered the purpose of demonstrating the futility of attempting to compromise questions of this kind.

IV.

SUN PICTURES.—II.

BY MARY HOWITT.

We have left the miller now for some time, and having reached the top of the long ascent, find a cold bleak region lying beyond, still ascending to the distance of several miles, and the higher we go, the keener the air becomes. A wind like that of March careers along, sweeping up eddies of dust from the hard, rocky, and uneven road. The trees are become much more scattered, and have that dwarfish, weather-driven look, peculiar to trees on high and bleak situations. Formerly this part of Staffordshire was called "the Moorlands," and very wild, hard, and uncultivated was the life of its inhabitants. Great crimes were committed amongst them; crimes of a savage character, originating in the sordid spirit of their lives, and the gross ignorance which prevailed everywhere; they were not of frequent occurrence, perhaps, but never died out of the memory, and furnished inexhaustible topics of talk for the winter fire-side, or of brooding thought in the wild Moorland fields, and thus probably became the seed of further crime. Our own ancestors, by the father's side, came from a wild place called the Foxholes, some miles beyond Waystones; and though the property had been out of our family for two generations, yet thither it was that we were now bound. To visit this old home of our family, of which we still possessed old writings, dating back as far as Richard III., together with many curious family papers of a much later date, was, in fact, the object of this little excursion.

As we advanced higher and higher, the evening air grew ever keener and colder, and the sun setting with a chilly uncertain light, amid cold grey clouds, we soon found that the miller's three miles seemed likely to lengthen out considerably; for after we had gone, as we imagined, nearly that distance, we were told still, "about three miles," and, indeed, so it must be, if yon scattered village of stone houses, standing high on what must have been formerly the bleak Moorland edge, be, as we are now told, Waystones. On we go, the few people we still meet having still the look of miners, but uncouth and rude like the character of the scene. And now an open carriage passes us; a large, yellow, ill-kept, old carriage, dating back, it may be, to the cultivation of these Moorlands. A gentleman and a boy, his son probably, are in the carriage, and a slovenly man, like a farm-servant, drives. The cold air blows little clouds of dust along the hard, stony road; long shadows are cast in the cold white light of the setting sun, and the gentleman and the boy in the old yellow carriage cannot comprehend what has caused two ladies, one with two light umbrellas in her hand, the other with a very small travelling bag, to be walking towards Waystones. Strangers are scarce

here, no doubt; and as long as the carriage is in sight, we are evidently objects of wonder and conjecture to its occupants.

On we go, still ascending. The sun has now sunk below the horizon; the wind blows colder and wilder. We pass hard-featured, clay-besmeared men, leaning to talk over field gates, who stop their talk and watch us with rude wonder as we pass; but they venture upon no remarks. There is an uncouth, hard element about them, which corresponds with the character of the country,—its bleakness, its stone walls, and its half cultivation. Now we reach the first scattered houses of Waystones; the doors are open, and dust-coloured children are playing on the door-steps. Untidy girls are nursing babies, and women with folded arms, or each with her baby, are leaning against their doors, scolding or gossipping. Both the girls and the women are remarkable for their dismal finery; flounced barège dresses in tatters, and tawdry flowers in their filthy caps. It is like a wretched portion of London, transported bodily to these high, black, moorland regions. We begin to feel anxious about our night's lodging, and inquire for the Black Bull. But the Black Bull is at the farther end of the village, and we go on more hopefully. On we go, still ascending, seeing nothing on either hand but the same unattractive features.

At length we reach a point where the road divides with an acute angle, enclosing a triangular, or wedge-shaped little field, along one side of which towers up a remarkable row of tall, weather-beaten, and very picturesque Scotch fir trees,—the only trees in or about the village. Along the top of the little field stretches the front of a cheerful stone house, standing on the road-side, and divided from the field by green painted iron pallisades. Cheerful white blinds are in the windows, and a large sign of a black bull's head at the corner raised our drooping spirits, for here assuredly is better hope of entertainment than we might have expected.

The front door of the "Black Bull" opens into a little passage, on the right and left of which lie two rooms. On the left, the door is closed; the right-hand room is open, and shows a large, brick-floored better kitchen, or common parlour, and a man at work covering a sofa, with large-patterned, many-coloured drugget. We ask to see the landlady; and the landlord makes his appearance, with an old greasy cap on his head, from a back room where several men sit drinking. We again desire to see the landlady, stating our intention of passing the night there. He looks inquiringly at us, as if considerably puzzled, says nothing, but coming into the little passage by which we have entered, endeavours to open the left-hand door, finds it fastened within, and retires. The next moment bolts are withdrawn on the other side, and we enter into another brick-floored parlour, but evidently of a higher grade, the atmosphere of which is stiflingly hot and close, and everything covered with dust. Here the landlady, being summoned by her husband, appears, and both stand before us, eyeing us with silent but close scrutiny. Is it possible we think, that they question our respectability; two ladies coming thus on foot? and we say that we

were recommended to come to Mr. Malkin's or Mawkin's, of the "Black Bull," by the Rev. Mr. Coldwell, of Combe, a village at no great distance. "Mawkin, indeed!" exclaim both husband and wife, with something of scorn. "Mawkin had not lived there for nearly a year; everybody knew that! Mawkin and his wife quarrelled; Mawkin was bankrupt; Mawkin was a disreputable fellow, and his wife was his match,—and he had not paid eighteenpence in the pound!" "Oh, indeed!" we say, somewhat crest-fallen. "If you want Mawkin, you should not come here!" said the burly landlord. "I'm John Strut, Mr. Strut, as I may say, butcher and farmer, of Waystones, and own some of the best property in the place." We are glad to hear it; but we are tired, we say; have walked from ——, wish to see our bed-room, and want our tea. This we address to the landlady, a stout, rather comely woman, with everything which she wore awry. But we have not yet passed through a sufficient examination. And now both husband and wife question us as to the identity of our clerical friend. 'Coldwell!" they repeat. They know no *Cold*well—not even of Combe. They know Hotwell—perhaps we might mean him, the Rev. Mr. *Hot*well, of Waystones; at least, who ought to be living at Waystones; but Coldwell they ignore altogether; and Hotwell knew as well as they did, that Mawkin did not keep the "Black Bull!"

During this discussion, though we apparently come off with anything but flying colours, we are scrutinized from head to foot, by husband and wife; and the conclusion arrived to in both minds, probably communicated by some telegraphic sign, being favourable, we are conducted by the landlady up-stairs into a room which astonishes us; so cheerful and homelike is its aspect, so different the bare brick floor and vulgar style of the room below. Here a short, buxom young woman, the landlady's daughter, is putting up a clean, nicely-fringed roller blind, and we are now informed that they are preparing for Whitsuntide, when the great club, a hundred and eighty, dine there. The room is wainscoted, and painted of a soft grey, with white mouldings: the bed hangings are grey and white damask, which, in its woven pattern, represents orchard-boughs laden with fruit; quaint, but not disagreeable. A series of Westall's prints, storms in the harvest field, and other such subjects, together with a handsome glass case of stuffed game birds, are the ornaments of the room; while the other furniture is good, and in excellent keeping. It is like the guest-chamber of some country parsonage, and we express our unqualified approbation of everything, excepting a gentleman's carpet bag, boots, and sundry toilet articles, which betoken previous occupation. "Yes," the landlady says, "a mining gentleman engaged the room three days before, had slept there one night, but is now gone somewhere; if he returned she will find him quarters elsewhere." With this assurance, therefore, and requesting that all his luggage be carefully removed, we joyfully take possession, and order our tea.

Returning to our dusty, brick-floored parlour, the atmosphere of which is much more bearable from the fresh air we admitted before

leaving it, we find, though the dust still remains unremoved, a remarkably well appointed tea set out for us. Since we have been upstairs, the large wainscot cupboard with its glazed front, in the fashion of country public-houses, has been opened, and from the grand display of Sheffield plated goods, tankards, tea-pots, waiters, &c., the best paraphernalia has been brought forth, and together with white and gold china, presents a very inviting array; to all which are added hot buttered toast, thick country cream, a wholesome loaf of home-baked bread, butter in pretty little pats, new laid eggs, and fragrant tea of such extraordinary strength, that we dare not venture upon it without an additional supply of water. We look on in astonishment, and can but express our pleasure to the buxome young girl, in her grey barège flounced dress, the landlord's daughter, who smilingly waits upon us. She evidently takes great pleasure in us, and intends to do her best for us, and as a mark of her good-will grows confidential; tells us of the Mawkins's, who were "scandalous people," and that they themselves were not brought up to "the public line;" that they came to the Black Bull about a year ago; that they were all born and bred in Waystones; that she and her mother had never in their lives been further than the next town, seven miles off; her father had been to Manchester, but to London—no never! That it was a very busy, tiring life, that of the public line, that they never could go to bed early, not till "the company" was gone, and on Sunday mornings consequently it frequently was three o'clock in the morning before they were in bed, because it was a rule never to disturb "the company." But, did she really like "the company?" we ask; "for instance, is it not disagreeable to hear a man shouting and noising as the man is now doing who has been drinking, and shouting, and noising ever since we came into the house?" "Bless you!" she replies, smiling, as if compassionately upon us, "that is only Mester Brassy! He is, to be sure, a noisy old gentleman; but there is no harm in him! The worst of it is," she says, "that it is so difficult to get a servant, and therefore she has such a great deal of work to do. Why now, look at me," she says, dropping her arms, holding them apart from her person, and spreading out her hands, "I've never cleaned myself since morning! I 'm just as I was when I got up!" She did not look dirty nor untidy by any means; and her smart grey barège looked much more like an afternoon than a morning working dress. Of course we expressed our condolence, whereupon she assured us, that a servant had come, quite unexpectedly just before we arrived; that she had offered herself ten days before; she had no character; but her mother engaged her, and as she did not make her appearance, they had given her up. She had come, however, with her boxes and all, just before we came, which was very odd; did we not think so?" We cannot but be struck with the remarkable coincidence; after which, this communicative damsel confides to us various other interesting facts, such as that she was at the boarding school at Waystones, but only as a day scholar; that they expected her cousin "Sam" at

the club-dinner; that Sam was a farmer at Windy Head, near Rams, and that he kept as many as fourteen cows; her father had "better than a hundred and twenty acres, and Sam had about ninety." These two numerical facts are not, however, communicated until various little sums in simple addition had been gone through.

"I know it's that, or more," added she. The bulk of this long communication, however, was not made until, our tea being completed, she came to carry the things away.

The noisy old gentleman, Mester Brassy, becoming noiser and noiser the dusker it grew, and finally the miller and his fat horse and flour sacks having arrived at the Black Bull, he too, and sundry other men, as we were informed, were drinking with him. "What a foolish noisy man he is!" we said to our pretty waitress. "It is a pity that there is no one to send him about his business." "Oh, bless you!" she said again, compassionating our ignorance, "he has sons at home to mind his business!" Again we stood reproved before her, and she carried out the last remains of our tea equipage.

Wishful to know something of our morrow's journey to the Foxholes, we requested the landlord's company for a few moments, and he entered in his short coat and with his greasy cap on his head; nor was he less communicative than his daughter. He promised to put us in the best and shortest way to the Foxholes in the morning, and he branched off in every variety of subject. We had mentioned Mr. Coldwell the Rev.; he had spoken of Mr. Hotwell the Rev. There was a feud between the parish of Waystones and Mr. Hotwell; but he did not live there, though his church was there; but at Rams. "Rams?" we asked, "where was that?" remembering what we had just heard of Cousin Sam of Windy Head. "Rams," said the landlord, advancing to the window, "is yonder church that you see over the hill through the fir trees." We saw it; we had seen it all the way on our long walk to Waystones; it was the strange, tall, melancholy grey stone tower that looked like a land-mark. "Yes, he lived at Rams; there was service at Rams and Waystones morning and afternoon alternately. But Mr. Hotwell said that there was no house good enough for him at Waystones, and yet our friend the landlord assured us that he himself had given notice to his own best tenant, who lived in one of the best houses in Waystones, to quit, that it might be ready for Mr. Hotwell! But no! he would go to Rams, and to Rams he went! And he, Mr. Strut, of the Black Bull, felt himself much aggrieved. Of course we could not do otherwise than take Mr. Strut's view of the subject, especially as he assured us that he owned some of the best houses in Waystones, that he was a butcher, and farmer, and farmed "better than a hundred and twenty acres of land;" nevertheless we very humbly suggested that perhaps Mr. Hotwell, who, according to his account, had a wife and nine children, might prefer locating them at Rams, seeing that the population of Waystones and its neighbourhood appeared anything but attractive: and with that we were informed regarding Waystones, that it belonged to small proprietors; people owned their houses and a

few acres of land, and that "everybody was very well-to-do." And again our informant told us about his own houses, "Some of the best in Waystones! Everybody liked to be his own landlord; that was the way here; it was more independent like. No, there was no Squire, nor great landed proprietor, nearer than Squire Biles, of Beak, and that was six miles from Waystones." We asked, if the people were thus independent and landed proprietors, how it was that we had seen so much appearance of squalor? and the reply to our inquiry was that the men were mostly miners, and earned good wages—from a pound to thirty shillings a-week, but that they spent it as it came; and the women loved fine clothes. They did not save; but they were not badly off. "No doubt they visited the public-houses?" we said, remembering that we trod upon delicate ground; "were there many in the village?" "Yes, five, and all pretty well frequented." "No doubt," we again suggested, "that they liked jovial companions, like those who were at that time carousing in his own kitchen?" and we modestly suggested that if the noise, which was then growing ever louder, continued, there would not be much chance of sleep. The landlord replied, as his daughter had done before, that "It was only Mester Brassy, who was a very good sort of man; he had his drinking bouts everyone knew, once and awhile, and that you would not, perhaps, see him within the ale-house door for months after that; but he liked his glass, and when he was a little fresh he treated everybody that came near him, so there was naturally a good batch of them now together. But he was a very good sort of man, no better in Waystones."

The full moon lighted up the vast landscape, and the little triangular field, the dusty road, the long line of picturesque fir trees, and the distant grey tower of Rams church as we went to bed, but not to sleep, so vociferous waxed the merriment of Mr. Brassy, and his drinking friends, to which was added the accompaniment of an accordion, which filled up every pause, and perhaps softened the louder tones of the Bacchanals. But no trouble can last for ever; and at length, when we had turned over in despair, for the hundredth time, a sudden silence fell upon everything. The Brassy-Bacchanals and the see-sawing accordion were equally hushed; first one door banged, then another; first below, then above, after which the silence of midnight lay over all.

Next morning, waking in our orchard bed, we found it high time to rise. We had slept profoundly: it was nearly the breakfast hour which we had mentioned over night, and we rose hastily. The morning was grey, and almost threatened rain. The aspect of everything in and about Waystones looked grey. The absence of clergyman or other spiritual teacher—(for we had been told the night before, that there was not even at this place the methodist chapel or school usually to be met with in similar districts)—the absence of any man or woman superior to the sordid small proprietor who scrapes together money to purchase his house and field, and drinks all the rest—gave a picture of a low religious, moral, and intellectual state, which had little joy or comfort in it. But we had no time for moralizing at the moment, and has-

tened our toilets. Before, however, they were completed, we see coming up the dusty road on the right hand of the triangular field three dust-coloured objects, which, as they approach the top of the road and the corner of the house, resolve themselves into a boy of about twelve, in a dirty, drab-coloured smock-frock and old drab wide-awake, and a girl of about the same age, in an old drab gauze or barège frock, with dirty blue ribbon bows down the front, and an old dust-coloured bonnet stuck on her head, together with a donkey, dust-coloured like themselves, wearily bearing on its back a wooden pack-saddle, on which was piled about half a hundred-weight of coal. On they came till they reached the very front of our window, when the boy ran on, leaving the girl and ass. At this moment, however, a remarkable circumstance occurred, which was quite beyond the comprehension of the girl. The ass would not move; in vain she pulled it forward, in vain she beat it; advance it would not; and the reason why was at once evident. The wooden pack-saddle had become slightly overbalanced in straining up the lane. The ass knew, by its own instinct, that if it attempted to move, the load would tumble over. Seeing plainly, from our elevation, the catastrophe which was at hand, we open our window, and tell the child to let the ass stand still, because the coals are slipping to one side. Either the girl could not understand our undialectical English, or the sudden apparition of the two strange ladies who had arrived the night before at the Bull's Head, so completely discomposed her, that she pulled frantically at the ass to remove both herself and it from our influence, and so doing at once brought about the consummation. The ass, willing to oblige, but able to do so only on certain terms, kicked out one of its legs, and down went coal and pack-saddle together! It might have been our evil eye that had done it, so wild and woful was the look which the girl cast up at the window, and then screamed like one in sudden despair for "Sammy" to come and help her. Her screams brought at length the faithless "Sammy," and a tall, strong woman to the rescue, who, after surveying the ruins for some little time, set about to repair it in a very business-like manner. The pack-saddle was re-adjusted, and the main quantity of coal replaced, when the girl again taking the bridle and casting a scared and resentful look at the window, moved off with the ass hurriedly out of the reach of further disaster, leaving Sammy in much discontent with about one-third of the coal which he was ordered by the woman to bring on in a wheelbarrow, which by some mysterious means had suddenly appeared upon the scene. Sammy was an ill-looking, sullen lad, with the scowl of a young Cain on his unhappy face; and looking after his sister, the woman, and retreating ass, shouted almost furiously, "I shanna du it mysen!" At length, as no help made its appearance, spite of this reiterated assurance, Sammy, scowling up the road, slowly heaved the coal into the barrow and moved off.

(*To be continued.*)

III.

SUN PICTURES.—III.

BY MARY HOWITT.

Entering the uncarpeted parlour where apparently none of the cushions of dust of the former evening had been removed, again the preparations for our meal surprise us by their unobtrusive style and sufficiency; and until the eggs, toast, and ham make their appearance, we amuse ourselves by studying the picture gallery on the walls, pictures of a remarkable kind, hunting scenes, in which violently red, white, and black horses mounted by intensely scarlet riders, leap ditches and fences,—the whole work of art being constructed of that metallic foil or tinsel which figures so largely in coarse papier-mâché embellishments; it was gaudy, and effective according to the taste of persons in the "public line," and as a relief from its glare we turn to an exhibition of photographic liknesses hung over the chimney piece. The landlord, in his greasy cap, which no doubt was a portion of his head, was unmistakable. So also was the landlady, though now figuring in black satin, gold chain and brooch, and a magnificent cap. There too was the buxom daughter, clad in silk attire, lace collar, gold chain and brooch; a very comely maiden, to whom we will hope Cousin Sam, of Windy Head, may prove a worthy lover. But who is this? Can this be Cousin Sam? A stalwart young man, sitting under a Grecian column, and leaning one elbow on a table covered with an embroidered cloth. He is well dressed, with gold studs in his shirt, and a blue neck-tie. "That's my brother," said our host's daughter, coming in with the ham and eggs. "He's the butcher. He is there, as you see him, in his Sunday dress. But that picture is not half so good as this," said she, pointing to another photograph which hung on the opposite wall. "Here he is in his butcher's dress. It is beautiful! there's blood on his apron, and a drop of blood on his cheek!" We had moved at her recommendation to the other wall, and examined this second representation of the son of the house—and to her surprise, somewhat revolting from the sanguinary accuracy, preferred the young man in his Sunday clothes. There he sat, in his sister's favourite photograph, very complacently beside the chopping-block, with his knife in his hand and his steel by his side, and the traces of his trade photographed from the life; but we could not admire the portrait, though she again assured us that it was the very image of him. "Is it your brother then who plays the accordion?" we asked, remembering the performance of the last evening. "Yes; it was he; he played very well, did we not think so?" We had thought him a nuisance; but of course having no wish to destroy her pleasurable impressions, did not differ from her; and sitting down to breakfast,

admired the merciful ordination of Providence, which not only fits the back to the burden, but creates liking and pleasure out of the most revolting circumstances of life.

Our bill, which was satisfactorily moderate, paid, we again set forth, the one carrying the two umbrellas, the other the small travelling bag. The good wishes of the house apparently go with us, as the landlady still with her clothes awry, the buxom daughter in her flounced grey barège, and the new servant, a pale, tall, and delicate girl, with a lily-like aspect, who for some sin or sorrow's sake, it seemed to us, had preferred service at "the public," stood at the door to wish us "good speed;" and, accompanied by the landlord in his short coat and greasy cap, we set out on the shortest road to the Foxholes. Our talk by the way is again of the well-to-do small proprietors who make up the population of Waystones; of the clergyman who will not live amongst them; of the discomfort of their homes, and of the evenings spent at the ale-house; but of course our friend could see no harm in that; they must meet for a little talk and good fellowship: and this remark led us to Mr. Brassy of the night before, whose revels had prevented our sleeping. "There's no harm in that Mester Brassy," again our landlord assured us; "he had his drinking-bouts now and then, but that probably they should not now see him for two or three months." Our landlord, in consideration of us, his guests, he said, had forcibly taken him home the night before, and so cut his jollity short; as it was, it was all he could do to get him home. "But it was better, you see," he remarked, "than having him dead drunk." We thought so certainly, and very simply asked if it were not a grief to his family, that he should indulge in such orgies. We were ignorant women, and the landlord had patience with our folly; merely smiling, therefore, as in pity of our simplicity, he assured us that it was no trouble to Mr. Brassy's family; that Mr. Brassy was a very good sort of man, and treated everybody that came near him with liquor when he was in one of his drinking-bouts! After this we had nothing more to say, and our landlord having led us into a field-path through narrow openings in the stone walls, bade us still follow this path till we reached the ridge of the high land before us, when we should emerge upon a regular road, where at the first house we must again inquire our way.

We are now upon what unquestionably was moorland half a century ago, large fields enclosed with stone walls; the land is poor and covered with rushes. Marsh plants grow everywhere, marsh ranunculus and cotton-rush; and every hollow is trodden into holes by the feet of cattle; and stepping-stones are laid across for human accommodation, showing that it is still a region of bleak, fenny, unreclaimed moorland, dreary and desolate in the winter season, though now not without a certain poetical charm, like the spirit of an old northern ballad. The sky was grey and calm, for the wind of the preceding evening had in great measure subsided. All around us lay the melancholy moorland, out of which continually cropped grey stone, whilst here and there the

surface was broken up into high ridges, around and upon which were massed, in fantastic confusion, piles of grey rock, broken into blocks, standing on end, as in some ancient druidical temple. Scattered brambles, bilberries and birch-trees, marked all such stony wildernesses, and with this exception there was no growth whatever to be seen but short grass, rushes, and marsh-plants. Here and there in the remoter distance, young fir plantations showed where some larger landed proprietor owned the soil, and had thus introdnced more earnest cultivation into the dreary waste. There was scarcely the note of a bird to be heard, only now and then a cuckoo shouting into the silence, whilst, ever as we advanced, peewits rose up from the ground, and wheeling heavily round and round above our heads, filled the air with their wailing, petulant cry.

We have now reached the high ridge to which our landlord had pointed, and, as he promised, we are upon an apparently old road, very uneven in its surface from the native rock upon which it has been formed, and which is not yet worn smooth. Before us lies an extent of country similar to that we have left, terminating in another ridge at the distance of five or six miles, varied, however, by being diversified by deep valleys, scattered grey stone farm-houses, around which are always more or less wood, planted, no doubt, when the houses were built, as a screen against the cold winds. Flocks of sheep and young cattle, as on our road to Waystones, are everywhere to be seen, but human beings there are none. However, a grey-stone house with its small windows, and still smaller casements, as is always found in these primitive regions, stood on the ridge of the hill by the road side, amongst its ash-trees ; and thither we went to ask our road forward to Foxholes. All was profoundly still about the house, and the door shut. We knocked, and then ventured to lift the latch, and a child of almost angelic countenance, and about seven years old, timidly came forward, evidently to answer our knock. We were astonished at his beauty, which, though of an angelic character, was still quaint. His thick hair of a dull golden hue was cut square across his forehead, and hung upon his shoulders ; his features were refined, and his mouth had that tender expression which reminded us of an etherialized Sir Joshua or Gainsborough in style, but in character of one of Perugino or Fra Angelico's young angels. His complexion was almost colourless, with a delicate brown hue under the clear skin, and his eyes brown ; but the wonderful charm and pathos lay in the lower part of the face, in the tender angelic mouth, and softly rounded chin. He was a child to take into the heart at once, and the sentiment which he excited was earnest prayer to the Father of all lovely, and pure, and tender spirits, to guard His own, and to keep and mature this child into the fulness of His own beauty and love. Perhaps the little human angel was startled by the love which he called forth, for he shrank back into the dusk of the kitchen, where stood the apparatus for cheese-making, the large tub, strainer, bowl, mould, and the rest, and forth came a somewhat comely, healthy,

smiling, and otherwise remarkable woman, of about forty, and hiding by her large person the interior of the house as she stood in the doorway. Having heard our question as to the road to the Foxholes, and cheerfully promised full information, she marshalled us from her door, past her pigsties, through her flocks of chickens and geese, across the road, and stationing herself in the wind under the stone wall, revealed herself to us. She was brown and red with wind and weather. She looked full of health and strength; good-humour and kindliness beamed in her eyes, and dimpled her hardy cheek. She had a very old bonnet on her head, originally quilted, but the silk was torn off in tatters, and the wadding hung out like loose wool; a thick covering of short cow-hair in front showed that it was worn during the operation of milking; an old black-lace cap, very loose and tattered in the border, protruded from the bonnet, and waved also in the wind. Her dress of blue cotton, patched with every imaginable kind of blue print, with very slight attempt, if any, at matching the original pattern, also hung in tatters. Old gown and new patches, all were alike moveable and pendant, so that, standing there on the bleak moorland edge, in the wind, which here was strong, she bore no distant resemblance to a gallant man-of-war displaying all her colours, together with the colours of other nations, on some naval festival.

Nor, apparently, had her employments been less heterogeneous than her attire, for one of her arms bore evidence of having been up to the elbow in the flour-bin, the other equally high or low in the pig-tub. But she was too hearty and cheerful to stand upon trifles, and having very readily pointed out our way, she then told us, that their home was called St. Mary's Edge, that the wild mass of splintered crags just by, was the High Stone Edge; that her husband was a hard-working, saving man, who had bought this place himself, and was hoping to lay more land to it yet; that she had five children living, and one dead—"a dear one," she said,—"a very dear one!" and her cheery face was overcast with emotion. "He died," she said, "when he was five; it was four years since now, but she had not yet got over it." We told her that our dear Lord had taken him as a pledge from her; that she must think of him as such; that he was provided for now, far better than if he had all St. Mary's Edge as his own; that no doubt our Lord had taken her lamb to himself, that He might better win her too; that through the power of the Holy Spirit, He would turn her from sin and lead her in a new way, to the home where her child had gone; perhaps, through the power of the Holy Spirit, to turn her from sin; to suggest holy thoughts, to prepare her for re-union with him hereafter. She listened to all we said with earnest, tearful eyes, ejaculating continually, "Dun yo think so?" It was her one expression, and as she uttered it, it implied a great deal. "Dun yo think so?" she said, when we spoke of the angelic beauty of the child within doors. "Dun yo think so?" when we said that death was the birth into a life, of which this, our present life, was but the shadow—"Dun yo think so?" New ideas, more cheerful,

more consolatory, more ennobling, were flowing into her soul as we left her standing on the high edge of St. Mary, in the wind, with all her little flags fluttering upon her, as if indeed to celebrate a festival, the advent of a new religious idea, of a higher faith in God.

On we went again, leaving the old stony road, and turning by short cuts into the fields, among the flocks of sheep, the herds of young cattle, and the screaming, whining peewits, till at length we found ourselves at the edge of a deep, wild valley, broken up into little round hills, splintered with crags, and shaggy with brambles, bilberries, and birch-trees; here and there lay trunks of large birch-trees, which had been felled years before, but which still lay grey and venerable as the rock itself, and among and above which had sprung up thickets of briers, the growth of years. It was a wild and melancholy place, in the very heart of which, perched upon one of the most prominent swells, stood a small, dreary-looking house, under the shadow of a very old, weird birch tree. A little doubtful whether the indistinct footpath which we were following through this wild region led beyond this dismal dwelling, we knocked, for information, at the door, which here again was closed. Three children, squalid and dirty, and a half-starved dog, of wolf-like form, but spotted like a hyena, made their appearance. Within the twilight of the house we again saw preparations for cheese-making, but no motherly woman this time presented herself; only the three wretched children, and their villanous-looking attendant.

They gave us the information which we needed. The footpath would lead us to Foxholes; this place was Murner's Hole (hole designates many localities in this neighbourhood), and with this information we pursued our way, the gaunt, wolf-like dog rushing barking after us, set on probably by the unhappy children.

A shallow stream running slowly over a rocky bed, tracks its way along the narrow bottom of this chaotic valley, and ascending the other and much less rugged side, we soon find ourselves in the cheerful pasture fields of a large old stone farm-house, standing, with its substantial out-buildings and barns, amongst old elm and oak trees. In the immediate neighbourhood, almost close to the farm-yard, stand two other farm-houses, but of more modern date, with their out-buildings and barns also amongst their screen of large trees. Are all these the Foxholes? Or is there one, the Foxholes proper, the home of our ancestors? We will inquire: and knocking at the door of the first and largest, we learn that this is the Foxholes proper, as we imagined. The other houses—strange enough, as it seemed—are called, the one "Badger-holes," the other, "Foumart-holes." We are now at the *ultima Thule* of our rambles, and our business is not very definite. But, on the plea of weariness, we request permission to rest for a few minutes, from the well-dressed, business-like, farmerly woman, with a clean, white-satin-ribboned cap, who opens the door; and we are cheerfully invited to walk in. It is a large house-place into which we enter, with its bare brick floor, large cupboard or press, handsome clock,

wooden sofas or "squabs," standing within the wide chimney, and large dining table standing against the wall. A comfortable, cheerful, farm, home-place indeed, is this which we have entered. In the bright window stand a splendid arum in flower, and two or three very fine calceolarias. A young man, in his working clothes, is lying out-stretched upon one of the "squabs;" he raises his head as we enter, and then composes himself again to rest; and we, supposing him ill, apoligize for disturbing him, and express our regret. He is not ill, only tired; he was up late last night at a large party," replies the farmer's comfortable wife, whom we will call Mrs. Beever; and we, remembering the jollifications of Mr. Brassy, grieve to think that this young man may probably be one of his class. Possibly Mrs. Beever suspects our thoughts; for whilst she employs herself in sorting out stockings, and laying them very smoothly together in pairs, she goes on to explain that there had been a great tea-drinking at the chapel the evening before, and that all her family had been there. It was the great annual meeting at the chapel in connection with the school, and they had sat down two hundred to tea. "It was a nice time," she said; "the Rev. Josiah Jones was there, from Manchester, and all the local preachers round about, and they had an excellent address, before they came away, from Mr. Jones, and prayer, and hymns sung—and altogether it was very soul-stirring and comfortable, and they did not come away till late." We could not exactly understand why the mother and the rest of the household, all of whom, according to the account, had been at the tea-drinking, should seem alert, and be cheerfully pursuing their daily work, except the young man, who alone appeared overcome by fatigue; but of course we kept our thoughts to ourselves, expressed our approval of such social gatherings, and asked how far off was the chapel? Four miles. It was a roadside chapel, belonging to a scattered population, and there was a Sunday-school for the children. The Methodists, too, were a great blessing in those parts, and the Primitive Methodists, too, did a great deal of good work. The preachers often came to the farm-houses, and preached in the kitchen, if it were a good-sized one, or in a barn, might be; and in that way some spiritual life was kept up. "Otherwise," said the good woman, "these are barren places, and it's a weary and a barren life that we lead."

When the conversation flagged, we admired her plants in the window, and then learned that they, too, had figured at the chapel tea-drinking the preceding night. They had stood on the middle of the table, and everybody had admired them.

Of our ancestors we could learn nothing. Mr. Beever, the present occupant, purchased the place less than twenty years ago. Before him, it was owned by "Mester Cotterill, who bought it of Squire Jarvis," and beyond this none of their writings went. There was no memory left of the original proprietors who had held it for three or four hundred years, and from whom Squire Jarvis had probably bought it. So said the wife, and so said, by and by, the husband. Thus our journey, so far as regarded our ancestors, was in vain; nevertheless, here un-

questionably they had lived—a life, too, more wearisome and barren, perhaps, than that of which the good Methodist complained; for then intelligence of any kind was much rarer: even Methodist tea-drinkings did not then take place. The church was far off, and no school existed. Our ancestors, men and women, as we well knew from certain yellow parchments contained in a mouldering old canvas bag, locked up in a closet at home, had been unable, for many generations, to sign their names; yet their homestead and their acres were by no means inconsiderable.

When good Mrs. Beever had finished smoothing her stockings, she apologized for the necessity of leaving us, as her cheese had to be made; and so saying, she moved towards another room—the large, light, and cheerful working kitchen of the house. We asked permission to accompany her, which was readily granted, and the young man was left to sleep undisturbed upon the "squab." In this kitchen proper, cheese-making was in preparation on a large scale. A large fire was burning; everything seemed plentiful, and a tall, rather handsome young woman, the daughter, was assiduously washing up an innumerable quantity of basins, pans, and crockery. The daughter was shy, and blushed when we spoke to her of the pleasant party of the preceding night. Perhaps there might be some tender reason for her conscious blushes. Perhaps the Rev. Josiah Jones, or some zealous "brother," had caused the opportunity to become more than an ordinary tea-drinking to her. Here all was cheerfulness and bustle. The father, a quiet farmerly man in a grey suit, who was overlooking the operation of pigsty building, on which a bricklayer and another son of the house, less overcome by the late tea-drinking than the one in the house-place, were employed came in and out. But he looked at us with quiet, questioning glances, somewhat as the landlord of the "Black Bull" at Waystones had done, and assured us that nothing was known there of our ancestors. His manner was short and repellant; and the wife, as if to make up for her husband's coolness, offered us refreshment, pressing us most cordially to accept it. We, however, only accepted a draught of whey from her large cheese-tub; and then, after vainly endeavouring to elicit some of those dreary old histories of crime and sorrow from the past, which we knew had existed at Foxholes, we rose to depart; for whether it were the good Methodism of the house under its present *régime*, or its good sense, I cannot say; but the evil old past appeared to have taken no hold upon their memories. "No," they replied, "they never had heard of such things. No doubt what we said was true; but it was before their time, and it was better to let those old tales die out." We rose to depart, and again were hospitably pressed to eat and drink. But again we refused; and the mother, leaving her cheese-making, accompanied us into the yard on the way to the field, to point out our course onward. Here no sooner was the purpose completed for which she had left her work, than, leaning forward, she said confidentially, "You asked about old stories; now I can tell you something that is quite true, and happened just here at the Foumart-

holes about eighty years ago. I've heard those tell it that knew the parties. There lived then at the Foumart-holes two brothers, named Horseley. Neither of them was married, and they were both of them in middle life. They did the work of the farm together, slaving and toiling from morning till night, for they were both of a getting and saving turn. The elder, however, wanted to have it all to himself, and determined to make away with his brother. So one day when the oven—one of those big ovens which they always used in those days—was heated for a big baking, and his brother was sweeping it out ready for the bread, he thrust him in, shut the oven door, and the unhappy man was burnt to death! It's true, as I live," said Mrs. Beever: "but then when he had got rid of his living brother, the spirit of the murdered man came back, and never let him have an hour's rest! They were then building a large stone barn. I'll show it you," said she; and taking us back through their own yard, she led us across a little field towards the Foumart-holes, the farthest of the three houses; and pointing out a large, well-built stone barn, of probably eighty or a hundred years old, continued: "they were about that very barn; but the spirit would not let them go on with it; what they did in the day, he undid at night. At last, however, they were told to build a half moon into it; and there it is you see!" said she, directing our attention to a large arch of redder stone, forming, as we should have imagined, the arch of a large doorway in the end of the barn. "So they built that half moon into it," continued she, "at the time of the half-moon; and either seven or nine clergymen—I don't know which, but either one number or the other, for it must be an odd number for such a job—laid the spirit in Horseley Hole, about a mile below; and after that they were never more troubled with him."

We still wanted to know various particulars: whether Horseley was tried for the murder; whether the clergymen were willing to lay the spirit of the injured brother without bringing the murderer to justice; how it was known indeed that he *was* the murderer, and who gave the half-moon formula regarding the barn-end? But of this she could tell us nothing definite, though she said that it was "the carcase," after the life had been burnt out of it, that told the story of the murder; but more she could not say, only that "we might depend upon its truth."

"Can we learn any further particulars at the house itself?" we inquired. She feared not; but she thought we might, at all events, try. Encouraged by this hope, we passed through a narrow opening in the stone wall, and walking along the back of the house, came round to the door at the end, which opened into a dismal-looking kitchen, where again we saw cheese-making, and churning also, in progress. A young woman was churning, an old woman making cheese. She was a strange-looking old woman, in a linen skull-cap, small featured, but of a hard and sordid expression, with a pinched nose and screwed-up mouth, such as might have indicated kindred to the old murderer. She was very deaf, and every word had to be screamed into her ear; and even to the most casual or courteous remark, nothing but a snap-

pish answer was returned. At length, we ventured upon an inquiry respecting the old tradition; whereat she scowled on us, crushed her cheese-curd more vehemently than ever, and vouchsafed us only the most angry replies. It was evident that she knew the story, but she would not acknowledge it. "If we had been told of a ghost, we might go," she said, "to those who sent us;" and then she dug again into her cheese-curd. At length, after a sullen silence, she said, that "The mester would soon be at home for his dinner, and he had better not find us there!" What this intimation might mean, we could not say; but seeing the young girl look scared and anxious, we thought it best to retire, even under the guise of a discomfiture, feeling that the gloomy tradition of the house was, in spirit and even in form, very worthily represented by that hard, pitiless, old woman.

Returning again through the farmyard of the Foxholes, we had reached the field; when, turning round to look back at these singular places, we saw good smiling Mrs. Beever in her white-satin-ribboned cap, running after us with a besom-like nosegay of peonies, lilacs, white-Nancies, old-man, lemon-thyme, crown-imperials, and all the flowers of her garden, which she had tied up into a parting gift for us. It was very graciously intended, and most kindly offered; and we, receiving it with equal goodwill, told her of our reception at the Foumart-holes, received her good wishes, and went on our way with the huge nosegay carried in one hand, as a balance to the two umbrellas in the other.

We are now in the solitude of green, round-topped hills, which lie basking in the afternoon sun. A long tortuous road, winding along the somewhat dreary extent of country which we had passed, and which, looking backward, we could trace in the hot sun, like a loosely-waving white ribbon, astonished us by the distance we had come since issuing out of the fields beyond the horizon line, and where we had asked our way at a solitary cottage, lying in a deep woody hollow. The sole occupants of this cottage were two children; the elder, about eight, left in charge of the baby, which, placed on the wooden "squab," was hedged in by an upturned saddle. Not a soul besides was to be heard or seen in or about the house. Wood pigeons were cooing dreamily in the wooded hollows; a cuckoo was shouting into the sunshine, and the little brook, which ran along under the trees, sent up a low murmur like an exaggerated hum of insects. Roses and deep blue columbines were in flower in the little garden; but there was neither dog, nor cat, nor man, nor woman to be seen,—only the little girl, sitting by the "squab," and the baby inclosed by the old upturned saddle.

And now we had come for miles along the white limestone road on which scarcely a passenger or vehicle was to be seen; had passed a large, desolate, way-side house, once an inn, for this was formerly one of the great coaching roads, every mile accurately marked by its cast-iron milestone; and these way-side inns, in those days, had been great posting-houses, where not only the mail and other coaches were horsed, but where "lords, and dukes, and noble princes," travelling post, required relays of horses, or, it might be, stayed the night. All

their bustle, all their life, all their importance had now disappeared; and they stood, like this house, solitary, silent, and desolate, combined farm and public-house, the inferior character of the latter sinking the respectability of the former; therefore, the broken window-panes were unmended, and the walls were defaced by damp and decay.

But now for the last two miles we have left the old coach-road, and every step takes us into a greener, sunnier, more silent seclusion. Somewhere in the bosom of these round green hills lies a village, and to that village we are bound. The highest point of these round hills we will call Wyver Low, and the village of Wyver lies beneath it. We cannot be far from Wyver; but as yet neither village, nor village church, is in sight. A tall countryman, in a drab-coloured smock-frock, and wearing a drab-coloured cap, approaches us, coming on with a long slouching gait; from him we ask our way to Wyver. He answers us in a long drawl that we are right, and we notice whilst he speaks, his cap, which is someway unique. The colour is a yellowish-drab, and the texture singularly transparent. We discover that the material is bladder! And why not? Bladder is light, and water-proof; surely, therefore, as good as gutta-percha cloth. A very grand cap is this bladder-cap of yellowish-drab, with bows of ribbon at the ears, and the outline of the head within visible from without! We begin to question whether Solomon was quite correct in saying that there was "nothing new under the sun." In a bladder-cap, did we not behold a novelty?

We are now in Wyver—a slumbrous village of grey stone, basking in the hot sunshine, in the bosom of the green hills. All is as silent as though the valley were enchanted. A white cat, sleeping in the sun, starts up at our approach, and rushes noiselessly into a garden full of yellow trolius, broad green Solomon's-seal, and dark-blue columbine. A queer, sun-burnt, yellow-haired boy, and a little child, stand at a neighbouring garden-gate, quietly feeding a number of little yellowish-green ducklings, with a stiffish paste made of oatmeal and water, which the boy drops leisurely with an old spoon out of a broken brown and yellow dish, and for which the brood eagerly scramble round his feet. The boy is so shy that he turns red to the very roots of his hair as we stop and speak to him, and he dares not lift up his face. We have no idea what kind of eyes he has. He says that his name is Zachery, and of the ducklings he informs us "that ther shud bey nointeyn on 'em."

We are bound to the last house in the village—to that neat, grey-stone house standing just at the foot of the green slopes of the hill; a garden lies on three sides, and the little window that looks on the road is full of flowering plants, conspicuous amongst which are a scarlet cactus and a white geranium. The window is of a simple Gothic style. It is a pleasant house. We are cordially welcomed by the first person we meet—a fair-complexioned, bright-eyed young woman, the daughter of the house; and are led up a low flight of steps into the room where are the scarlet cactus and the white geranium. It is the sitting-room

of an invalid—an old man, who rests near the window in a large chair, and who wears a large long coat and picturesque wide-awake. He does not take off his hat to welcome us, for long invalid habit has accustomed him to in-door wearing of his hat. It has become a portion of himself, and is very becoming. Its broad brim casts a soft shade over his handsome old countenance, with its long well-chiselled features and patriarchal expression. He welcomes us cordially, and we sit down near the pleasant window, with its scarlet cactus and white geranium.

We had never been in this house before, and yet a strange feeling comes over our mind, as if, some time or other, in or out of the body, we *had* been there; had gone up that little flight of steps into that little room; had seen the patriarch sitting in his tall-backed chair, with his little table and books before him. How is it? Whence come these glimpses as of a past experience of that which is but even now occurring, and all of which is outwardly new to our senses? Whence do they come, and what do they indicate?

We talk with the old patriarch of times and people long since past and gone. A whole generation has vanished since we met. We stand as upon a rock, and look, as it were, over a wide sea. We speak of many a voyager across this ocean of time; of some gone into port successfully and peacefully: of others yet far out at sea, driven by storms and grievously tossed; and of others who have suffered total shipwreck. The sun of peace shines calmly on the old patriarch, and the billows of time break softly at his feet. His soul has a sure anchorage in the Saviour, and he fears for himself no storms. He knows that he cannot suffer shipwreck, and calmly and joyfully awaits the day when the Great Master will welcome him into the harbour of Eternal Rest.

The patriarch's daughter places a repast before us. She has a fair face and affectionate eyes, and we know that we are welcome. We could not be better entertained if we were two queens. The best that the house contains stands before us. And what could we have more, especially when that best is so excellent? The patriarch takes his afternoon rest, and we walk with his daughter, attired in her muslin dress and broad straw hat, to the church. It is a very simple and homely village church: all its embellishments are of the most humble character. The village is poor, and cannot afford church decorations. The patriarch's daughter wishes for a new altar-cloth: that which is there she herself has given, but she thinks it unseemly, and trusts that a better day may come when the altar may have a fitter covering. We sit in the patriarch's pew, and notice the gutta-percha tube which communicates from it with the pulpit, for the old man is somewhat "hard of hearing." Then we read the mural tablets.

We return through the village; see a very old man, nearly a hundred, with hair as white as snow, sitting in the sun, beside his cottage wall: he is old enough to be our patriarch's father. Shy little Zachery, with his nineteen ducklings, which we again see him feeding, is this aged man's great-grandson.

We again enter the patriarch's house. Tea is ready waiting us. The little parlour looks deliciously home-like. The evening sun shines in through the window where stand the scarlet cactus and the white geranium, and falls in pleasant gleams upon the old man's books: upon his Bible, with its large print—upon his books of daily prayer and pious exercise. The patriarch smiles, and says that he needs now no larger library; in fact, that he finds one single verse of Scripture will give him subject of meditation frequently for a whole day. How, then, should he want many books? As the evening light surrounds our old friend with its peaceful glory, he appears, in our eyes, even more calm and venerable. The hospitably-spread tea-table has been drawn up close to his arm-chair, and with its tea-equipage of delicate white and gold china, its old silver tea-pot and cream-jug, its glass dishes of delicate preserves, its delicate cake and slices of buttered plum-cake—a dainty common in this part of the country—presents a most tempting aspect.

After tea, we take leave of our aged friend,—never, in all human probability, to again see his calm face upon earth—and accompanied by his daughter and a young grand-daughter, whom we had not seen until this moment—a bright open-browed girl of twelve—we set out on our further pilgrimage, they accompanying us on our way, the daughter to the breezy top of the first hill, and the grand-daughter a mile or two farther, to the top of the yet higher hill beyond, whence our road would lie clear before us to Wolstone, where we proposed to pass the night. The grand-daughter bounds forward like a young roe on the mountains, full of energy and youth; and now she points out this wood, or that farm-house in the distance, of which something memorable was to be told. She was bright of countenance, with a clear, keen intelligence beaming from her eyes; her limbs were strong and agile, and her frame firmly knit. She looked at us, every now and then, with the kindliness and cordiality of both the old patriarch and his daughter combined. She was a pleasant companion. "And now," said she, pointing to a farm-house, shrouded in wood, and standing upon a distant hill, "that is Thornborough Hall: I was there last Wednesday." "So were we," we replied. "I know you were," she said; "I saw you there. Mr. Throwly, of Thornborough, is my uncle. I had gone over to see a school-fellow there, but she was gone over to Ashington, so I did not see her. It is a very long walk to Thornborough Hall." "Were you then," we asked, "the young girl who lay asleep on the 'squab,' and whom we disturbed?" "Yes," she said, "I was. I was very tired, and disappointed, too. I lay down to sleep, and you came." Now we remembered her well, though we had not at first recognized her. The silent girl who never spoke, but whose intelligent brown eyes and clear forehead we had noticed—it was she! Tired and disappointed, she had nothing to say to us, who came as a gay party, riding and walking with feathered hats and parasols, with ponies and a large dog, to break up the quiet of that large farm-house, slumbering amongst its woods. We had come like a hurricane, with

our large dog waking up the ire of the usually peaceful farm-dogs; with our trampling of ponies and pony-carriage; with our laughter, and many voices of ladies and gentlemen, making free in a strange place. Well might the child, weary and disappointed, have nothing to say to us, and only look on with quiet, wondering eyes.

But it had been, after all, a happy day to her, she said. The gay party of unexpected visitors were a pleasant astonishment to her. She had listened to their talk, and wondered at much of it. She could now relate what this and the other one had said, and told how the farmer afterwards talked over all that had been related by his guests; and how much amused he had been, and how heartily he had laughed at many things that he had heard. And when evening came, and with it the time for her to retrace her steps homeward, her good uncle had given her a golden sovereign, to make up to her for her disappointment of the morning.

Presently we are in the midst of the hills on very high ground, though not yet on the highest. A vast prospect lies around us, and from this point we obtain a glimpse as it were into the human life amongst the hills. Yonder to the west, and now seen clearly in the light of the setting sun, lie the great quarries; and rising up in the golden glow upon that ledge of the hills, with its tall peaked roof, and tower-like belfry, is the new school-house of which we have heard so much,—that excellent school, not many years established, but which already is working so great a change in the juvenile population, where they learn to sing so sweetly, and are humanized in many ways. Our youthful guide has much to tell us of this school, and of the excellent young clergyman who has been for several years too ill to undertake the care of a parish, but who spends his summers here, caring for the well-being of the poor in many ways, making them love goodness because they see it so beautiful in himself and in his mother, whose one ceaseless anxiety is the health of her son, and who, but for her care, would long since have passed away to the society of angels. Very sweet was it to hear this child, the grand-daughter of the patriarch, describe the lovely life and character of the mother and son. "They are so good, and their voices are so gentle," said she, "I never forget anything which they say to me—nor does any one—because every one loves them."

We are now passing what are called "the model cottages," also belonging to the quarries. Four double houses, or rather cottages facing east and west, so that now one cottage of each pair is in strong light, the other in deep shadow. We had already been told of the extraordinary comfort of the houses; of the pretty garden to each, and of the ample supply of water, which is a great boon amongst these hills, where water is scarce. And now we stand before them. Stalwart men, returned from their day's labour, are working in their gardens; children are playing about; at one cottage a young woman is sitting at her needle-work in the sunny porch; in another is a family group at tea. A pleasant mixture of healthy labour and home comfort is before us,

and we think that the spirit of the good clergyman and of his mother has left its divine influence here, leading upward to the Source of all love, to that sacred love which alone can give true beauty to life. But scarcely have we rejoiced in our imaginary picture of an earthly Eden, when we are called upon to witness a very different reality. All at once, out of one of the houses that lies in deep shadow, proceeds a shrill female voice, as hideous as the barking of angry dogs, and in concert with it the jangling clatter of fire-irons and fender, and the crash as of all the earthenware in the house, together with the screaming of children. It is frightful to hear, and our first thought is to rush in and save the children; but as the scolding voice scolds on, and other things very evidently yet remain to be demolished, we pause before entering the battle-field, and look round to see if the neighbourhood does not rise to help and save. But no; all goes on as peacefully in and about the other houses as before; the men work on in their gardens; the children do not pause in their play; the young woman does not leave off sewing. They are untroubled by the discord. They are used to it; they understand its cause better than we do; and moralizing upon the impossibility of finding model tempers to harmonize with model cottages, we go on, hearing as we proceed upon our way the shrill tongue of the termagant, and the crash and clatter of breaking and thrown down household gear.

And now, having parted with our young guide, and descended from the hills, we are in the deep wooded valley below, in a slumbrous region of silence and shadow. The sun has long set, and from the foot of the hill we traverse fields left for mowing-grass along a very indistinct footpath, to the small village of grey stone houses where, at the sign of the "Holly Bush," we hope to pass the night. The village lies so close beneath the hills behind which the sun has sunk, that it already appears almost dark; and with some little anxiety to be housed for the night, we ask our way to the "Holly Bush." Across the broad flagstone which forms a bridge over the footpath in wet weather, through the two upright flagstones in the grey wall, and we are in front of a quaint public-house, the "Holly Bush," kept by Ephraim Pepper. It is a place to figure in an artist's sketch-book; a long, low, old house, standing in a large open yard, half public-house and half farm. We enter the open door and stand within the kitchen of a genuine country public-house. A large fire burns on the ample hearth, and large "squabs" or settles extend on either side, one terminating in large arms close to the light window. There are no guests regaling themselves. No one is to be seen, but a huge man, very much resembling Friar Tuck in person, with a rosy face and large white beard, and with a little cap stuck upon his head, lies full length upon the "squab," his head resting upon a leathern cushion reared up against the arm. He is reading the newspaper by the light from the window. He leans back his rosy visage as we enter, and looking at us with his eyes upside down, informs us that there is no landlady, and that we cannot be accommodated there for the night. Then slowly rising, and appear-

ing almost gigantic in so doing, he ushers us from the "Holly Bush" to seek our night's quarters elsewhere, advising us to go to a viilage a mile and half further off. Standing within the shadow of his doorway, his huge figure melting into the dusk, his crimson face and very white beard look, in fact, anything but like a rose and lily; still, laughingly, we speak of him to each other as the "rose and lily," and pursue our way.

(*To be continued.*)

IV.

AVALANCHES.

According to Byron, an avalanche is a "thunderbolt of snow."

Travellers are frequently disappointed on witnessing the spectacle. Brought into cheating proximity by the purity of the air, and deluded by the colossal proportions of a mountain landscape, they have been known to treat the phenomenon as one of a very trumpery description. Even poetical minds find it difficult to believe that the white spirt and hin streak which suddenly appear on a distant rock are the true representatives of the deadliest missiles contained in the arsenal of Frost. "From some jutting knob, of the size of a cricket ball," says Talfourd, "a handful of snow is puffed into the air, and lower down, on the neighbouring slant, you observe veins of white substance creaming down the crevices—like the tinsel streams in the distance of a pretty scene in an Easter melodrama, quickened by a touch of magic wand—and then a little cloud of snow, as from pelting fairies, rises from the frostwork basin; and then a sound as of a thunder-clap!—all is still and silent—and this is an avalanche! If you can believe this—can realize the truth that snow and ice have just been dislodged, in power to crush a human village, you may believe in the distance at which you stand from the scene, and that your eye is master of icy precipices embracing ten miles perpendicular ascent; but it is a difficult lesson, and the disproportion between the awful sound and the pretty sight, renders it harder."* Occasionally, however, the spectacle is exhibited on a scale so splendid, that the cravings of the most anxious sight-seer are fully appeased. Crossing the Wengern Alp, directly in front of the Jungfrau, whose precipitous flanks are famous for their snow-falls, Dr. Cheever was privileged to behold two glorious specimens. "One cannot command any language (says he) to convey an adequate idea of

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* Talfourd's "Vacation Rambles and Thoughts."

III.

SUN PICTURES.—IV.

BY MARY HOWITT.

Coming forth from within the shadow of the hills, the evening appears to reverse its natural order, and to grow lighter the farther we advance; and as we approach the village whither we had been directed by the "rose and lily," the shades of night are still scarcely beginning to fall. The church bells are cheerily ringing, and the cottagers are at the doors of their rose-embowered cottages. It is like a fairy scene. Everywhere gardens, and in all the gardens flowers, and the bells ringing so joyously that the very air seems full of rejoicing and melody. "And why are the bells ringing?" we ask; and learn that the telegraphic message awaited yesterday at the palace with the rhododendron gardens, had arrived at length. The long strife was indeed ended. The Protestant had triumphed over the old Catholic line. Our friend of the organ, alas! we think may still sigh on; for he, we fear, will never play the magnificent organ under the new *régime*. No two sides can win in a battle, unless the vanquished win patience and meekness and the renunciation of self; and then unquestionably he may be the greater winner of the two, let the other win whatever he may. Thus we moralized, whilst the bells rang on.

There are no lodgings for us at this village inn, any more than at the "Holly Bush!" Fishing gentlemen occupy the whole accommodation, and the landlady, in her grand black satin habiliments, glittering and shining all over with bugles, shakes her head and has no sympathy to bestow on ladies who travel without a carriage. Night is coming on, but that matters not to her; and she intimates that at the "White Hart," at the end of the village, we may find "*suitable* accommodation." The bells have ceased ringing, and silence and twilight have settled over the village; not a child is abroad; they are all now in bed, and signs of night meet us at every turn as we come within sight of the house to which we have been sent. The "White Hart," standing in a forest, the work of some humble village artist, depending from the huge limb of an old tree overshadowing the road and a horse-trough, gives us but little promise of what *we* consider "suitable accommodation," as it came in view before the house itself. We enter the humble hostel, however, and find ourselves in a sort of cottage kitchen. Two or three men are quietly drinking on the hearth, and an old woman is ironing by the light of a very feeble candle. We state our wants, confessing very little hope of having them satisfied. The old woman sets down her iron upon the patten-ring fixed into a block of wood, which forms her iron-stand, and looks at us for a moment or two. She is puzzled at first, and then troubled. "No, she cannot find

lodgings for such as we." Good,—at least in one respect; she has faith in us, and does not doubt our respectability. She would give us a bed if she could. But her daughter with her child is ill in the house, and there is only the one bed in her son's room.

No! it will not do! We cannot be accommodated at the "White Hart;"—where, then, are we to find a night's lodging? It is a curious feeling, that of being in a civilized land, in a Christian village, in the midst of comfortable houses where are so many unoccupied guest-chambers, wholesome cheery rooms, with their white blinds drawn down; blankets lying on the bed in careful folds; dainty fresh sheets laid together amongst lavender, in chests and drawers and presses, ready to be spread upon these beds; and yet none of these havens of rest to be prepared for our reception! We stand at the door of the little public-house; we look up and down the village road. In the gathering twilight we see here and there a comfortable house standing, with its blinds drawn down, its eyes closed, as it were, and looking itself ready to go to bed. And yet, where is *our* bed? Whilst we thus ponder, the good landlady, and another woman, who has suddenly made her appearance on the scene, in a light, almost white, dress, and looking in the dusk very much like a moth, are talking together. "Would Mrs. Thomas give them a bed, think you; or Mrs. Parramore?" And, finally, the moth-like woman flits out, and having visited Mrs. Thomas on our behalf to no purpose, ushers us back again along the dusk road into the village. We are to try Mrs. Parramore's. But Mrs. Parramore is ill in bed. No matter, however; all the more pity has she for those who are weary and have no bed to lie down on. Mrs. Parramore is our African woman to us poor Mungo Parks in this strange land. From her bed she issues orders that we shall be hospitably entertained. She cannot see us, for we are not in her chamber, and it is now quite dark; but she has no suspicion of us. She questions not our respectability, though we have no carriage. We are taken into the best parlour; we are lighted by two candles; fresh milk, as in Mungo Park's case, is set before us, and she is the mother who has ground our corn which is now presented to us, by proxy, in the person of her tall smiling handmaiden, in the form of buttered plum-bread, such as we were regaled with at the patriarch's. Long life to Mrs. Parramore, and may she never want bed and board, buttered cake and fresh milk, as long as she is on this earth; and when she goes hence, may angels minister to her!

Next morning it rains. The plashing of rain on the window pane is the first sound we hear on waking in Mrs. Parramore's white-curtained bed; and looking out we see the thick-branched evergreens bowed with water. It must have rained for hours. Where had this rain come from, when the evening had given no sign of such a change? The sky above was of a uniform grey; it promised nothing but rain. The earth below was sodden, and the green hill opposite poured down little torrents, as if its top had bored a hole in a rain cloud. But we cannot lie in bed all day, even if it should rain unceasing torrents; therefore

we rise and dress. We had not ordered our breakfast over night, as we had done at the "Black Bull" at Waystones; but good Mrs. Parramore knew that if we wanted a bed over-night, we should want a breakfast in the morning; and coffee, toast, and ham, stand ready for us when we descend to the parlour. It is like finding the world suddenly transformed, to behold oneself in such a home as that of Mrs. Parramore. It is as if old selfishness, and suspicion, and unkindness, and thinking evil of the neighbour, had disappeared from among men; as if there were nothing but kindness and brotherly love, and helping the neighbour, and doing as you would be done by, on earth. We receive all in good faith; we bless our dear Lord who has thus provided for us, and eat with a hearty appetite that which human kindness has set before us. Whilst we are at breakfast, Mrs. Parramore completes her kindness by having risen from her sick-bed and descended to bid us welcome to her house, and to express the neighbourly hope that we had slept well and were well. We like Mrs. Parramore still better now that we have seen her; and looking at her calm widowed countenance, we read of the kind sympathetic heart within her bosom. We see her sons, tall, good-looking men, who have a pleasure in their mother's good deed; and we talk of this place and that in the country, and find that there are places which we mutually know, if not persons, and we are all capital friends together. What a world this would be if there were more honesty and more good faith one in another! And so there would be, as an universal rule, if man loved his neighbour as well as himself; he then, as a natural consequence, would not deceive and cheat; would not come before his neighbour with false pretences, and in good faith his neighbour would dispense to him, as he in his turn would dispense to his neighbour. Nor is such a blessed state of things to be regarded as hopeless whilst there are even now a few Mrs. Parramores to be found. When a great snow-storm commences, it is with a few scattered flakes; let us regard these good Mrs. Parramores, then, as the *avant couriers* of our Lord's great army of Love, which in His own time shall subdue the earth.

The rain abates, as we fully expected it would do, and we leave our comfortable quarters in a becoming manner, retracing our steps, as our route compelled us to do, in the direction of the "Holly Bush." But long before we reach this garden of the "rose and lily," the clouds again gather, and down comes the pelting, soaking rain, through which, with our dresses looped up and our umbrellas hoisted, we hasten forward beneath dripping trees and along roads which are like a river's bed.

The cattle stand with down-drooping heads hopelessly in the wet fields, and the few people we meet, are mostly men with sack-bags thrown over their shoulders by way of mackintosh. Without any ceremony we enter the "Holly Bush" kitchen. A huge fire is burning, the burly landlord is not present; a girl is mopping the floor, leaving pools of water behind her, as if in imitation of the clouds without.

The heat from the large fire has dried a little space round the hearth, and there we stand to dry ourselves, inquiring in the meantime if any carriage or light cart could be had to take us to our journey's end. We hear of no such vehicle from the girl who is mopping, and therefore wait patiently, standing upon the island of dry bricks near the fire until some more efficient source of information shall arrive.

Presently, in lounges with heavy, slow steps, a countryman, who like ourselves has been driven under cover by the rain, whilst his team stands without. He seats himself heavily on the large wooden settle, where the night before was extended the burly form of the "rose and the lily." He utters not a word, but sits and gazes inquisitively at us. A few minutes elapse, when in comes another man with the same, slow, heavy gait, and wearing a sack-bag over his shoulders, which having thrown off, he too seats himself by the first; and now four eyes are fixed upon us. We inquire from the two men after some kind of vehicle, gig, or light cart, which we might hire to convey us home. But neither can they give us any information on this subject; and again all is silent. At length No. 2 asks No. 1 if he have called for anything to drink, and receives as reply that he has "towd Mester Pepper to bring him a point;" which appears satisfactory. But before either Mester Pepper or the ale make their appearance, a third man, in a wet smock frock, enters, having also left his dripping, steaming team outside, and uttering the words "Well, surry" without receiving a response, makes his plodding way across the kitchen, and heavily drops down upon the settle, which by this time is pretty well filled. Our presence is evidently a check to social intercourse; for some minutes not a word is spoken, and then No. 3, turning to his fellows, inquires in a tone of surly discontent, "Are yo tu gooing to drink nowght?" and by way of reply, No. 2, rises, walks to the door, and shouts at the top of his voice, "Han you gin up business, Mester Pepper? Is there nowght, to be had this mornin'?" On this the "lily and rose," as snowy and ruddy as the night before, made his appearance, slowly crossing the yard with a couple of dead rabbits dangling in his hand; and, without salutation or apology to his guests, he enters, asks in a surly tone, glancing also at us, what we would like to have; and learning that the men each wanted a pint, took a jug from one nail and a key from another, and disappeared through a door at the end of the kitchen. We felt sadly in the way; the men never took their eyes from us, but still not a word was said,—their silence no doubt being their civility to us. But the question was, would they continue equally silent and unobjectionable while regaling themselves? We doubted this, and fearing that we might like their conversation less than their silence, we began to meditate our departure under any circumstances. But before we put this purpose in execution, No. 2 slowly heaves himself up from the settle,—his moist, steaming clothes emitting a strong farm-yard smell,—slowly crosses the floor, and going to the door through which the rosy, bearded landlord had disappeared, shouted down the cellar

steps an inquiry which showed at all events his friendly disposition towards us, viz., whether "Mester Pepper had a loight cart, or owght, as he could let the ladies hev?" and up from the cellar came a bucolic oath, and the gruff reply that he had his "dung-cart, and nowght else!" We thanked the willingly-obliging guest, and liking by no means either the reply or the temper of our "rose and lily," prepared at once to depart, let the weather be what it would; and scorning to order anything "for the benefit of the house," from so surly a landlord, we contented ourselves with giving a small gratuity to the maiden in her tall pattens, who was now scouring cheese-pans outside the door, and took our leave of the inhospitable "Holly Bush."

Fortunately the rain is over; the grey clouds are beginning to break, and though the trees still drip, and the water pours down the road in little torrents, there is nothing to prevent our proceeding on our way; and accordingly we soon find ourselves, now in pasture fields among dairy cows, and now in turnip-fields, the large turnip leaves emptying the water with which they are filled, upon our feet. We had been told that the road, as far as the village of Sturton, was a "blind road," and so indeed we found it. Not a house was in sight, or had it been, we could not have seen it beyond half a mile, for the heavy grey atmosphere enveloped every more distant object as in a misty veil. We plod on, however, through pasture fields and mowing grass, through turnip fields and green corn, and everywhere find so little track, that, but for an instinctive sense that we are in the true direction, we might have turned back every hundred yards. At length, to our great satisfaction, we perceive in the grey distance a scattered grey-stone village, and emerging from the fields, through a large grazing field full of milking cows,—at the top of which is a small stone-walled enclosure, where the cows evidently assemble for milking, and where three or four milking stools lay tumbled together in a corner,—we find ourselves in a bridle-path, which at half a mile's distance enters a turnpike road, traversing a high ridge of country, the white line of which we can trace for many miles on either hand. We know that we are now right, and though we are wet above the ankles it matters not, for wet feet can do no damage while the body is kept in action. Besides, the clouds have now become so thin, and almost transparent, that we expect sunshine to break through, every minute.

We are now on the long high turnpike road, and before us, at the distance of half a mile, moves at an almost imperceptible pace, a yellow, or rather lemon-coloured, caravan. It is a very conspicuous object in this high, bare landscape,—for we have left trees of every kind in the lower country from which for the last few miles we have been ascending, and now here again, we are in what less than half a century ago was open moorland, and which still retains its bare bleak character. We walk on briskly, not only on account of our wet feet but because the air is invigorating, and we are animated by a sense of having overcome all our little difficulties, and being now on the direct road home, which we hope to reach by tea-time. Walking thus, we

advance upon the yellow caravan and soon overtake it. It is large, and apparently heavy,—too large and too heavy to be drawn by one small, lean horse, which however bravely struggles on, with neck stretched horizontally, and bent knees,—but, spite of all, taking such short steps that it makes only slow progress. A woman and two men, all gipsy-like in their appearance—their dark complexions, black hair and eyes,—walk by its side, one man armed with a long-lashed whip, and the other and the woman each having a lithe stick, as if cut from the living hazel, in their hands. Having great sympathy with all suffering horses, and fearing we might see an exercise of gipsy discipline on the poor animal before us, we address the people in passing, in order to occupy for the moment their attention. "What does your caravan contain?" we inquire; and in reply receive a torrent of gipsy volubility, from which we extract that it contains "the greatest wonder in the world—the five-armed and five-footed lady, perfect in every part, four fingers and a thumb on each hand, and five toes on every foot, which had been pronounced by the nobility and gentry, and the faculty in general, as the greatest wonder in the world. Would we not like to see her? She was in bed, but we could see her for all that! They would stop their caravan; their horse wanted a rest, and it was only a shilling a-piece!—only a shilling a piece, and our fortunes told into the bargain, either by cards or the hand—a very good fortune, as they could plainly see; would not the young lady have her fortune told; or would not the elder lady like to hear of the good luck that was coming just to her own door? No! Well, past events? would not this lady like to hear something out of the past? If she heard what they could tell out of the past, she would believe that they knew the future. Only a shilling a-piece! Come, they would make a bargain, only sixpence a-piece, and we should see the wonderful five-armed lady for nothing!" And the woman struck upon the outside of the caravan as if to convey intelligence within, and the little horse in the meantime, as if understanding the parley and acquiescing in it, slackened still more its slow pace, and finally stood still, looking round with a melancholy weird sort of expression, and shaking itself in its brass-ornamented harness till the caravan rattled again. No; we did not incline to any offer. Neither the fortune nor the five-armed lady tempted us, and we walked on, hearing as we did so a mysterious voice issue from some part of the caravan, to which the woman replied in rapid gipsy language; and the men, by whip and sticks compelling the little horse into motion, the rickety caravan again began slowly to advance.

On we go, progressing along the high line of white limestone road, which becomes drier and drier as we advance, evidences of the late rain fading away one half-mile after another, till finally we have passed the region of rain, and once more are on a dusty high-road, with the sun shining down upon us, out of an almost cloudless sky. We are in the fine-weather zone again, where evidently nothing but fine weather has prevailed for many a day. And ever, also, as we advance,

looking backwards along the solitary road, still comes creeping on, at its snail's pace, the large, rickety, yellow caravan, and its lean little horse, to which no rest has yet been vouchsafed.

And now, leaving the deserted coach-road at a solitary old turnpike, which stands up with its high red roof, like a beacon in the wide landscape, we turn at right angles into another, which branches off here in the direction of those smooth green hills which have for some time been ascending on our right, crowned with patches of dark modern plantation, in a directly homeward course. Little children are playing together on the door-sill, and a pale, thin, scared-looking woman, in a widow's cap, is ironing within, behind the screen of flowering plants in her large bow-window, which commands from its three sides the three several roads at which this bar takes toll. There was something picturesque, but oppressively solitary, in the aspect of this lonely toll-house; and we involuntarily seemed to feel the weight of long dreary winter months, and the shudder of those occasional tragedies which have occurred in such places,—rarely it may be, but yet sufficiently frequent to fill the timid and imaginative spirit of any dweller here, if they happened to be of such a temperament, with a creeping hourly dread, and to make their life a long dream of terror. This thin, nervous-looking, ironing widow woman seemed to belong to this class, and cheerful summer though it now was, we thought of long winter weeks and months, with little travelling and long dreariness, dusk, and darkness, and of this solitary woman, her nerves all unstrung with apprehension, keeping her mournful watch on a road where gangs of so-called "shipwrecked mariners" tramp on their reputed way from Liverpool or Whitehaven, in the glooming afternoon perhaps, and with no prospect of coach or carriage, or even solitary horseman, to break the loneliness of the long moorland road; and no help within call, happen what might; and we wondered not at her thin, anxious, frightened look.

By this time we are very tired; we cannot walk as rapidly as we had done, though the approaching prospect of home, and the reunion with our beloved ones lies invitingly before us, luring us cheerfully onward; still we are weary, there is no denying it.

Two pedestrians like us, rejoicing over simple sun pictures of whatever kind they might be, could not possibly be too dignified or too proud to ride in a cart; therefore, when such a vehicle overtakes us, perfectly clean, though unpainted, drawn by a dark-brown, well-conditioned horse, though in very primitive harness, and driven by an agreeable-looking young countryman, in slouched wide-awake and drab smock-frock, it need astonish no one that we ask him to give us "a lift." The request seems, however, to take him by surprise; he looks at us inquiringly, as everybody does, and then very cheerfully gives consent. And now, seated in the cart, one of us on a sack of newly-cut grass for the horse, and the other on the cart-front by his side, we jog on, rather roughly, it is true, but with a sense of great relief and comfort after our long morning's walk; and so, jogging on, we talk of various

things, the young countryman being very well behaved and deferential. We are descending a long green valley or dale, which winds round the interlocking feet of the opposite hills, and is so narrow at the bottom as to admit only the road and a little runnel of water, hardly large enough for a rivulet, but which races along cheerfully in the sunshine, carrying its tiny thread of water, round the feet of other hills, till, at a few miles' distance, it enters, a little tributary, the beautiful river in the broad rich valley lying beyond the heights we have yet to cross before we reach our pleasant temporary home.

Our friend is going for lime, he tells us, to a kiln at the end of this quiet green dale, and he is not disinclined to be communicative. Before descending into the vale, however, we have an extensive view over the green hills I have spoken of already, with their patches of modern plantation. This is all pleasantly familiar ground to us, and, "There," we say, pointing into the distance, "lies such a hall, or such a farm-house," where we experienced not long before the hospitality of the owners; and our friend of the lime-cart enriches our local knowledge with many a little anecdote of first one and then another place or individual. In this way we soon become on the best terms with each other. And now we see, lying under the distant wood, a little house, or small peasant-farm, which also is familiar to us, and of which we have been told something which appeared worth remembering, and, desirous of making ourselves agreeable, we volunteer the information we had received. "In that cottage," we say, "lives a most worthy old couple, respected by everybody, who have brought up a large family of twelve children, without parish aid, and, consequently, have received, from some club or society established for the purpose, a handsome clock, on the case or face of which is inscribed the full particulars, the industry and good life of the worthy couple, together with their names and the names of all their twelve children." We tell our story out, and the young man drives on steadily, listening the while; then, suddenly turning round, with a beaming countenance, he exclaims, "That cottage is my birth-place, that old couple are my parents, and I am their twelfth child,—my name is Lewis Mellor!" We are startled; but it is all right, we are at once old acquaintance, and we congratulate him on coming of such good parentage; nevertheless, though it makes him more cheerfully talkative, it silences us, for we are evidently in too familiar a locality to venture more of our knowledge at hap-hazard. We are right so far, our next venture may be less fortunate; therefore we allow this singular coincidence to furnish the topic of our further conversation, and with him it never comes to the end.

And now we are at the close of our ride, for we see before us, in the green side of the hill, a little way apart from the road, the grey lime-kiln whither the cart is bound. The kiln is simple in itself, but produces a picturesque effect, standing there in that solitary dale, the quicklime, with which another man is filling his cart, sending up a thin, blue, smoke-like vapour, which floats above the kiln in the still

air, like a shadowy spirit-form, backed by the soft, sunny, green hill-side. Rested by our ride, and enlivened by its little incident, we dismount from our rude vehicle, and not scorning to shake hands with honest Lewis Mellor, we thank him for his courtesy, and receive in return his "hopes to oblige us again;" after which we cheerfully and briskly proceed on our way.

Again we ascend. We are now drawing to the termination of our wanderings, and the familiar objects of our daily walks are around us. From the hill-top we see lying before us a broad pastoral valley, abundant in flocks and herds, and the promise of an affluent hay harvest. To our left, with its scathed and riven sides, is the abrupt, gorge-like entrance to "The Dale," the picturesque beauty of which has attracted us hither for a summer sojourn. There, beneath us, is the long stone bridge, spanning the clear, gurgling, shallow river, the banks of which, at this point, are celebrated as the site of a bloody battle in the old Tudor times. The hills, the sloping pasture-meadows, the deep, sorrel-tinted mowing grass, the browsing cattle and sheep, the gurgling river, the shadowy arches of its old grey-stone bridge, the first cottage of our village standing forth upon the brow of the opposite hill, like a sentinel upon a jutting headland,—all lie before us, bathed in the golden afternoon sunshine. Thankful to feel ourselves, as it were, within our own demesne, and, full of delightful anticipation of our rural tea-dinner, to which we are in a condition to do ample justice, we proceed rapidly, and at the foot of the hill behold a familiar group! The beloved ones! They are come forth to bring us home! They who accompanied us a mile or two on our outset, three days before, now have come that distance in another direction to meet us on our return! Blessings on all loving hearts, who, thus responding to the mysterious impulse which urges them to go forth in the name of love, find themselves not disappointed!

And thus the Sun Pictures close, in flowery meadows, at the foot of green hills, and on the banks of one of the serenest, loveliest rivers of England, with the shout of the cuckoo and the jubilant song of the sky-lark in our ears!

IV.

THE GOLDSMITH COUNTRY.

Our home for the time being is the Rectory, or what serves as such, a pleasant cottage-like residence of two storeys, embowered amid a profusion of roses and jessamines, passion-flowers and japonica, that cover every window, and, better than stained glass, attemper the light